

**ENFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2016**

A Special Meeting of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Kaupin in the Enfield Room of the Enfield Town Hall, 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, Connecticut on Monday, March 7, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL-CALL –Present were Councilors Arnone, Bosco, Deni, Edgar, Hall, Kaupin, Lee, Sarno, Stokes and Szewczak. Councilor Cekala entered at 5:33 p.m. Also present were Acting Town Manager, Lee Erdmann; Assistant Town Manager - Development Services, Peter Bryanton; Town Attorney, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Attorney, Mark Cerrato; Acting Director of Finance, John Wilcox; Director of Public Works, Jonathan Bilmes; Roads Engineer, Donald Nunes; Town Clerk, Suzanne Olechnicki

Present from the Enfield Board of Education were Vincent Grady, Walter Kruzel, Michael Ludwick, Timothy Neville, Raymond Peabody, Thomas Sirard and Lori Unghire. Tina LeBlanc and Stacy Thurston were absent. Also present were Superintendent, Dr. Jeffrey Schumann and Assistant Superintendent, Christopher Drezek; Chief Education Technology Officer, Guy Bourassa; Safety/Security Director, Gary Harrison

BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET PRESENTATION

Dr. Schumann presented the Board of Education budget.

He provided the following highlights:

- 37% of students entitled to free or reduced lunch
- 80% receive regular education
- 20% receive some type of accommodation
- 2005/2006 – Enfield had 6,600 students
- October, 2015 – Enfield had 5,167 students
- Expected gradual decrease to 4,741

As concerns any decrease in enrollment, Dr. Schumann stated the Board of Education believes the value of the school system is getting better every day, and students are beginning to return. He pointed out since October, 2015, 49 students re-entered Enfield Public Schools. He stated on March 1st, they had a total of 5,216 students. He believes this is because of the programs and the people they have working in the school system.

Dr. Schumann referred to a graph, which shows that for the first time they broke the trend because fewer students are attending magnet schools than they were before. He noted non-public school enrollment shows numbers going steadily down over the last 12 years.

He referred to the funding stream and noted last year's allocation was \$65,883,682, and 52% of that money came from local funding and \$29 million dollars came from the State. He noted the real number to operate the school system was over \$70 million dollars because they were able to obtain another \$4.1 million dollars in grants.

Dr. Schumann stated when they began the budget process in the fall, they asked everyone what was needed to continue, and the total came to \$73 million dollars. He noted they are moving several initiatives forward, but not everything. He listed those initiatives as follows:

- Restoring a Grade 8 team at JFK
- Expanding unified sports
- Doing AP testing for all students at Enfield High School
- Adding new technology hardware
- New middle school technology instruction
- Speech Language Pathologist at the integrated preschool at Stowe
- New art kilns
- Opening a new career center at Enfield High School
- Adding a K-5 Social Worker
- Increase curriculum writing to meet 21st Century standards
- Adding part-time stipends at about \$2,000 each – one to be in charge of the chemical safety at Enfield High School to monitor all chemicals for proper storage; a percussion director stipend to work with a band of over 150 students;
- A special coach to work with staff concerning PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support)
- Science supplies and new technology software
- Culinary instructional supplies
- K-2 Counselor to round out the support at that level
- Expand technology instruction at the K-1 level
- A new Family and Consumer Science Teacher (to go from .6 to full-time to handle the extra needs of the students as they make their course requests)
- Additional K-5 office support to work with the schools to make sure they are monitoring the doors and able to support principals throughout the school year

Dr. Schumann stated there are \$69 million dollars in fixed costs, and all of the above totals \$992,000. He noted this amounts to \$70,647,668, or a 7.23% budget increase over the current year.

He explained some of the things driving the increase in the budget are as follows:

- Employee benefits have gone up significantly
- Special Education costs continue to increase
- Nutritional and professional services are increasing
- New initiatives amounting to \$992,000 (represents 1.4% of budget increase)

Dr. Schumann stated this budget has some major additional values as follows:

- Increased learning opportunities at Enfield High School for all students
- A new team at JFK, which will reduce class size from 27 to 21
- New technology hardware at the Grade 3-5 level and building level supports for students and families
- Enrich counseling and support services at the Grade K-2 level
- Grade 1 level will have new technology instruction
- The creation of a robust early learning opportunities at Stowe

He concluded stating the Town Council has been given a Board of Education budget book.

Chairman of the Board of Education, Thomas Sirard, stated one of the things the Board has been discussing is the opportunity for the Council and Board to work together in the future and possibly having a joint budget workshop so that it's understood exactly what goes into the Board's budget, how it is formed and what are the priorities.

Councilor Szewczak questioned whether culinary supplies are perishable or tangible. Dr. Schumann responded both. He noted there are some specialty items in terms of hardware that the chef would like to have on hand.

Councilor Szewczak suggested perhaps the culinary hardware could be discussed with the Enfield High School Building Committee. Dr. Schumann noted a detailed list can be supplied to the Committee.

Councilor Cekala referred to the 8th Grade team and questioned if that's replacing what was not put forth last year, and Mr. Sirard indicated that's correct.

Councilor Cekala requested clarification on the career center expansion, and Dr. Schumann stated as they divide the school up into four teams, there will be career support for students in Grades 9 – 12 as they make decisions as to what they wish to do after high school. He noted there will be a team of people working with students, including the guidance counselors.

Councilor Cekala stated she's excited to see the Grades K-2 counselors.

Councilor Lee questioned if new mandates are anticipated, and Dr. Schumann responded no, however, there's a bill in the Senate regarding changing the teacher evaluation system, therefore, they may be changing the evaluation plan again.

Councilor Lee referred to revenues and grants and questioned what the climate is expected to be for the current year and how will not receiving grants impact the anticipated program. Dr. Schumann stated it's difficult to predict what will come out of Hartford this year. He noted everyone is concerned at all levels of state government as to whether the funding stream will survive. He stated the school system has about 25 to 30

full-time positions paid for out of grants, and if those positions were not to be funded, the Board would have difficult decisions to make as to what they would fund out of their operating budget. Councilor Lee questioned whether that would impact the budget to the point where the Board of Education would modify its list of the new initiatives and priorities. Dr. Schumann stated if they had to make the tough choice of maintaining what they have or adding something different, the Board would have to take a hard look at their priorities.

Councilor Szewczak questioned whether programs are evaluated to make sure they are working and worth the effort in keeping them. Mr. Peabody responded yes.

Mr. Neville stated they have doubled the amount of AP classes, and they're also talking about trying to insure that students take the AP test as part of that process.

Mr. Sirard stated their curriculum writers apply for grants all the time, and a good portion of their salaries are covered by the grants they manage to bring into the district.

Councilor Lee requested an overview of what the district looks like in terms of high school funding and staffing as they go from two high schools to one high school. Dr. Schumann stated the Board embraced a new schedule where students will take eight classes. He noted traditionally students took four or five classes, but all students will be taking eight classes, which means there will be no study halls. He stated there will be an Eagle Hour during the day, which is a 60-minute block where the students have to manage their own time whereby they can get to the cafeteria, get their lunch, but also have time to go back and work with teachers or be involved in clubs or different activities. He stated they are able to do that because they're bringing the entire staff from Fermi to Enfield High. He noted they will need all of this staff because students will be taking 30% more classes than they would under the current system. He stated this will give students more academic time with less time in study halls. He noted they're anticipating a staff of approximately 95% of the size of both the staffs combined.

Mr. Neville stated last year, the Board had significant budget cuts, and they had to consolidate a lot of positions. He noted they took department heads and combined them. He stated positions that would have normally been cut this year have not been because they took the cuts last year. Mr. Sirard stated attrition has been happening while the merger has been going on, therefore, they've been preparing for the merger the whole time. He pointed out while they're carrying over 95% of the current staff level, that staff level has shrunk at the high school over the past two years, and that was done through attrition. He noted there are positions that were in existence three years ago that don't exist anymore today.

Councilor Lee requested that figure be provided, and Dr. Schumann noted it can be seen what is there for high school administration, but the individual departments, i.e., Social Studies, Math, Science are all broken out, therefore, it can be seen the change hasn't been dramatic across those departments.

Councilor Cekala questioned whether health insurance costs are a major driver in the increase, and Dr. Schumann responded absolutely.

Chairman Kaupin referred to a pie chart which shows the major increase drivers and requested more detail on Nutrition Services, Professional Services, etc. Dr. Schumann stated Special Education cost is making sure they're providing what they need to for all students who receive special education services. He noted other items include the new initiatives discussed earlier as well as new technology hardware. He stated the Board was awarded a grant for \$130,000 for technology hardware, and it was included in the budget because it didn't appear they were going to get the funding from the state even though they won the grant. He stated it appears that funding is now in the pipeline and they should hear within the next few weeks whether they will get that funding. He noted if that funding does come through, technology hardware will be funded under that grant, and the Board will be able to reduce that amount. As concerns Other Purchase Services and Professional Services, those are contractual and these are contracts they have with vendors, and those are going up moderately. He referred to Nutrition Services and noted normally that figure is \$195,000 and that figure is paid back to the Board for the cost the Board pays to run food services. He stated because they didn't have to buy a lot of equipment last year, they were able to double that number. He explained they need to keep a certain amount of reserve in their funds in order to stay solvent and have money to replace equipment. He stated the Board if not able to get the whole \$390,000 from them this year, therefore, they're only getting \$195,000, but as a result that leaves a \$196,000 hole in the budget from what was given the year before.

Mr. Peabody stated the Town Council can let the Board of Education Finance Committee know what information is required and what data is important to the Town Council.

Councilor Hall expressed her appreciation for the effort that went into the Board's budget.

Mr. Neville stated the Board would like to come back and talk about this budget and discuss what the impacts will be if they have to make any cuts. He noted such discussions will educate everyone, including the public.

Chairman Kaupin agreed and noted they will work through the Town Manager and Superintendent to find a common date that works.

MOTION #3523 by Councilor Stokes, seconded by Councilor Szewczak to go into Executive Session.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #3523** adopted 11-0-0, and the meeting stood recessed at 6:05 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Session of the Enfield Town Council was called to order by Chairman Kaupin at 6:06 p.m.

ROLL-CALL –Present were Councilors Arnone, Bosco, Cekala, Deni, Edgar, Hall, Kaupin, Lee, Sarno, Stokes and Szewczak. Also present were Acting Town Manager, Lee Erdmann; Assistant Town Manager - Development Services, Peter Bryanton; Town Attorney, Christopher Bromson; Assistant Town Attorney, Mark Cerrato; Acting Director of Finance, John Wilcox; Director of Public Works, Jonathan Bilmes; Roads Engineer, Donald Nunes; Town Clerk, Suzanne Olechnicki

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Matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting public security were discussed. Also discussed were Personnel Matters, Pending or Threatened Litigation and Real Estate Negotiations with no action or votes being taken.

Chairman Kaupin adjourned the Executive Session at 7:01 p.m. He reconvened the Special Meeting at 7:02 p.m. and stated during Executive Session matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting public security were discussed, as well as personnel matters, pending or threatened litigation and real estate negotiations with no action or votes being taken.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION #3524 by Councilor Stokes, seconded by Councilor Szewczak to adjourn.

Upon a **SHOW-OF-HANDS** vote being taken, the Chair declared **MOTION #3524** adopted 11-0-0, and the meeting stood adjourned at 7:03 p.m.